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AUTHOR Young, Jerry W.
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ABSTRACT

Heightened efficiency in higher education has led to declining commitment to student needs for personal development. Contributing institutional factors include over-emphasis on system efficiency, pride in physical facilities, status needs, obsession with management and accountability, lack of interaction between learner and educator, emphasis on empirical research and analysis, and lack of an analysis model that includes the human experience. Studies utilizing the Institutional Goals Inventory show that students expect higher education to help them to identify personal goals and develop the means to achieve them, to develop a sense of self-worth and self-confidence, to achieve a deeper level of self-understanding, and to be honest, open, and trusting in relationships with others. To accomplish these goals, higher education must go beyond facility construction, curriculum development, evaluation, policy development, data manipulation, and public relations to include the concerns of students and to offer effective faculty members who will function as inspiring and stimulating role models. (KJC)

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Effectiveness: The Human Dimension

Jerry W. Young
Allegany Community College
Cumberland, Maryland

JE 770 530

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever had the experience of being around long enough that things begin to seem to repeat themselves? Have you experienced that the more things change, the more they remain the same? For me, that is how I'm experiencing education these days. The feeling leaves me with a kind of flatness, low interest, low energy, and with a degree of disenchantment. The old drive to make education more responsive and relevant to the student has softened--I feel like I've lost too many battles and I am wondering if the war has also been lost.

On many campuses, great efforts have been expended in the effort to reduce costs in the form of improving the utilization of personnel and material items, increasing efficiency by manipulating the quantity processed and time variables, and by competitive purchasing. What are the educational costs of such manipulations?

Recently I visited with a friend one of the small towns in Western Maryland, near where I live. We stopped and walked around the old town--my friend went into a bakery and I went into a grocery store. Several things caught my attention--the store was crowded and busy, the items in the store were poorly arranged, there were six clerks working behind one long counter, the clerks shared two simple adding machines with a tape and one cash register. The cash register was toward the back of the store and the adding machines were on the counter. My first impulse was to begin, in my head, to reorganize the store in a much more efficient manner. Then I began to be aware of the behavior of the people in the store--no one was in a hurry, they greeted each other warmly, they chatted informally, they seemed to care about one another. I asked for directions from one of the clerks and suddenly found four people

all befriending me, giving directions, inquiring as to where I was from, sharing things about themselves. My friend returned from the bakery and we compared notes. Yes, both places were inefficient and could probably have been operated with fewer personnel and more service to the customer, but in both places, the customers were enjoying their conversations, felt at home in the stores and the businesses were providing more jobs in that small community than a more efficient operation would have.

What does that have to do with colleges? I think a lot. Major changes have been made in library systems over the past two decades--turnstyles, security systems and guards, ordered systems of processing people who want to utilize library materials--all very efficient. What has been the effect on library losses? They have been reduced, not stopped. What are the cost exchanges? In many cases the new systems are more costly than the differential between the old loss rate and the new loss rate. More importantly, all students, not just the few who were stealing library materials, come to feel not trusted, channeled, caged, and depersonalized through the red tape. What is the cost to the learning environment; can it be measured?

A registrar developed a very efficient registration system, expounding to his staff the importance of having all students follow the procedures to the letter or the system would not work. Registration, normally a frustrating process, now became even more frustrating with little room for human error and just as important, no avenue for the ventilation of the frustration built up during the process. When incidents of "deliberate sabotage" came to the attention of the registrar, he could not understand the behavior, and demanded that the offenders be punished. It was an excellent system, there was just no room for being human.

1. It is possible to become so efficient in services to human beings that the system becomes ineffective.

A friend of mine was asked to assist a public school district develop a program in reading; helping to teach English as a second language. When he entered the system as a reading consultant, he discovered that the system had already developed a sophisticated reading laboratory with over fifty thousand dollars of equipment. His response was, "To do what you hired me for, I don't need this. Get me some scissors, crayons, colored paper, paste, etc." Before they could agree on his contract, he had to agree with the superintendent to at least partially use the lab in his program. Was it needed for his program--no, but the superintendent needed it in the program to cover up a foolish mistake.

2. Too often we are still quite proud of our physical plants, our elaborate educational equipment and we lose the focus on the educational needs of the student.

Not too many years ago, I had a discussion with a prestigious faculty member on campus. It went something like this:

Him: You know what your problem is with the faculty?

Me: No, I really don't.

Him: It's really quite simple; I could tell you, but you would probably laugh.

Me: I don't think it's very funny.

Him: You let the students call you by your first name. I know that may seem like a small thing, but some of us have worked hard for our degrees and we think we are entitled to some respect.

Me. My degree is less important to me than my name.

3. Do we let our need for status interfere with our perceiving the needs of the student?

It all started with scientific management shortly after the turn of the century--the intrusion into the educational process of "sound" practices of management. Since then, we have lived with an escalating demand for efficiency, accountability, cost effectiveness, planning, problem solving, information systems development, etc. We have been through P.P.B.S., M.B.O., and now we have Zero-based budgeting.

I know of a man, who at a young age, had become independently wealthy as a very successful businessman. He was a brilliant man and he decided he would apply for a university presidency available so as to bring some order to higher education. He was appointed president and after several years the university was recognized as having one of the best management systems in the country, but there was no evidence that the quality and quantity of learning had increased.

4. We appear to be so obsessed with the idea of management in education, now given new momentum by the accountability craze, that we forget the nature of the enterprise in which we work.

Scholars have noted that as a system increases in size there are losses at the feeling level for individuals who comprise the system. These have been cited as alienation, depersonalization, and declining commitment.

Abraham Maslow remarked toward the end of his life, that he would rather see his daughter in a house of ill repute than to see her in a large university. He said this to dramatize the low quality of life

for most students at a large university.

5. It takes two to see one. Learning for most human beings is an interactive process--something that seems more and more difficult at any meaningful level in today's crowded world.

I am aware after years of struggling to be an innovative educator in the conservative climate of education that the norms of the system affect dramatically the implementation of new programs. How one does something (process) is bounded by the informal rules of conduct in the organization and thus affects the outcome. All the energy going into planning in higher education these days will not have the outcomes predicted, because none of the models, of which I am aware, give sufficient weight to the reactions and adjustments made on the campuses to the processes used to arrive at stated goals. A lot of the reaction can be understood in the literature on the resistance to change, but at this point in human engineering, the predictive capacity of current models of planning is quite poor.

6. To a very large degree the process determines the outcome.

It seems that the research and evaluation of higher education is shallow, brings little change, and generalizes very little from one situation to another. Even the new knowledge that is generated lies mostly unused on the library shelves of the nation's libraries. The problem may be the whole frame of reference for doing research in education. Abraham Maslow has said:

I am talking about ends: This is a revolutionary repudiation of 19th-century science and contemporary professional philosophy, which is essentially a technology and not a philosophy of ends. I reject thereby, as theories of human nature, positivism, behaviorism, and objectivism. I reject thereby the whole model of science, and all its works derived from the historical accident that science began with the study of nonpersonal, nonhuman things that in fact had no ends. The development of physics, astronomy, mechanics, and chemistry was impossible until they had become value-free, value-neutral, so that pure descriptiveness was possible. The great mistake that we are now learning about is that this model, developed from the study of objects and of things, has been illegitimately used for the study of human beings. It is a terrible technique. It has not worked.

(9:29)

Norman Sprinthall, a Harvard University professor, said in a speech in 1970 that sixty years of research in education had yet to establish the effectiveness of teaching or counseling. He went on to convey, much the same idea as Maslow does above, that maybe the whole model is inadequate, insufficient for the task, with too many sources of contamination when working with human subjects, and has become the possession of the technician. For example, he says, "Some have spent so much time calibrating instruments that we have exquisite means of measuring less and less. An ironic negative gestalt has occurred. We put together all the parts of educational research and find a sum less than the whole."

(16:8)

This parallels a remark by Charles C. Collins about testing: "Are we not measuring that which happens to be measurable rather than that which is significant?" (12:13)

Sprinthall calls for research centers at the school system site, for a type of research that is a clinical, field, applied, reflective, and formative in nature. This would be a type of hypothesis generating

research (trying to find the right questions) as opposed to hypothesis testing (trying to find the right answers). He goes on to say that "the researcher's most powerful tool is his own power to observe and question." (16:12)

Education is a human enterprise, a process, and as such it is fluid and dynamic. Most instruments available to researchers are based upon assumptions of stability. Further, cognitive analysis always fragments the human subject when educational research is done. Robert M. Pirsig makes this point well in "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance." "When analytic thought, the knife, is applied to experience, something is always killed in the process." (14:77)

7. Education sorely needs a model of research which leaves the human experience in the analysis. The model must accommodate the whole human being, because that is the way healthy human beings behave--integrated, not just a head--a cognitive, intellectual, thinking organism.

THE HUMAN DIMENSION

What the above seven points have in common is the failure of educators to give the appropriate priority to the human dimension. This is not to say that from a systems perspective, the human subsystem should be the sole focus, but it is to say that it should be seen as the most important focus. Several researchers on human values have said that values are superordinate to all else in individuals, in other words, in the important times of life, values not cognition, primarily influence decisions. It is important to see that what is needed is not a displacement of management, a diminution of the cognitive,

a deemphasis on excellence and standards. What is needed is an interdependence of all of the elements of the learning process, giving a position of prime importance to the affective domain.

The Institutional Goals Inventory, developed by Educational Testing Service, has been used widely in higher education to sample perceptions of constituency groups about what the goals are and should be in colleges. The results are showing a large new area of interest on the part of students. It is Individual Personal Development. Many writers in the human development field have commented for years that personal development has been an important goal of students in college. The response of colleges has been varied. Some seem to say, "We know that personal development is important and our students are getting this through their classes, extra curricular activities, and peer associations." Other colleges sought to develop whole new programs such as the Experimental College Program at the University of California at Berkeley. Robert F. Suczek, one of the researchers in that program, talks about the difficulty of comparing those in the Experimental College Program and those in the traditional program:

First, we could no longer consider each of the two educational atmospheres as sufficiently unitary, that is, internally consistent, to have the same measures applied. Individual students were having very different experiences in each atmosphere. The original concept of two different but comparable conditions now seemed too simple. Second, use of the scales was limited by ideological changes that took place before and during the period of the study. Student responses to our measures were, to a large extent, in terms of contemporary ideology rather than their own personality dispositions. Furthermore, we now had the impression that change does not take place in linear form, as the before-and-after measure of our original design optimistically assumed. Finally, we doubted increasingly that change could be related to educational structure at all; there are too many other events in a student's life, including changes in cultural values, which, at least to some, made the process of change emerge as an ideal.

(17:11)

Suczek goes on to describe the students reactions to the ECP project:

The students who came in for interviews expressed the most positive feelings about their contacts with us. Several told us

it was the only experience of its kind that they had in college. It gave them, they said, an opportunity to review what they were thinking and doing and to gain perspective on themselves. Some told us they felt it was the only time that someone on campus took an interest in what they thought and what they were doing.

(17:14)

The statement above is sad to me. It reflects the fact, that generally we do not listen to the students, our clients. How can we possibly know how effective we are?

It might be helpful to examine the four statements comprising the Individual Personal Development goal area on the I.G.I. to try to better understand specifically what kind of response many students are asking of their colleges.

1. To help students to identify their own personal goals and develop means of achieving them.

Many colleges are doing this through faculty advisement and counseling programs. Burns Crookston made a useful analysis of advising by differentiating the traditional, prescriptive mode of advising and the newer developmental mode of advising. This qualitative difference is critical and would lead one to suspect that the students would prefer the developmental process. The diagram below illustrates Crookston's point.

Contrasting Dimensions of Prescriptive and Developmental Approaches to Advising

In terms of	Prescriptive	Developmental
Abilities	Focus on limitations	Focus on potentialities
Motivation	Students are lazy, need prodding	Students are active, striving
Rewards	Grades, credit, income	Achievement, mastery, acceptance, status, recognition, fulfillment
Control	By adviser	Negotiated
Evaluation	By adviser to student	Collaborative
Relationship	Based on status, strategies, games, low trust	Based on nature of task, competencies, situation, high trust

(4)

2. To help students develop a sense of self worth, self confidence, and a capacity to have an impact on events.

Not much more justification than human dignity is needed to support the above statement and yet Jerry Farber's comment on "The Student As Nigger" brings one's attention sharply to the point that students have the least status, the least importance, the least influence (as individuals) in the educational system. How does one develop a sense of self worth in such a climate?

Helping students develop a sense of worth, self confidence, and a capacity to have an impact on events are all developmental tasks in the affective domain. Cognitive level instruction will not suffice. As Arthur Chickering has said, "If persons, not products, are to be primary, if the people, not the interplay of disparate, conflicting, and uncoordinated systems and pressures, are to control the future, then higher education must devote itself to men, not subjects." (3:345)

Are we ready to provide programatic experiences in higher education that facilitates the uncovering of values, the development of self and other awareness, and are we ready to sense and share, to laugh and cry with students?

3. To help students achieve deeper levels of self understanding.

At the deepest levels, the human being is a feeling creature. Self understanding occurs in the affective domain. It may involve interplay with the cognitive and psychomotor domains, but the reverberations of personal insight and change are felt.

We do an excellent job in education in cognitive level development. We do a fair to good job in psychomotor development. In fact, we may have gone as far as we can in those areas without programs to facilitate the development of the affective domain. Richard D. Stine has said, "----individual development involves a complex of interactions between personal, interpersonal, and intellectual competencies. Inhibition of growth in any of these areas retards and may arrest growth as a whole." (11.4)

Robert E. Samples who has done research on cerebral functioning in education remarks, "This emphasis on a quality of mind functioning linked to intellectuality and rationality now appears to have been an excursion into half the functions of the brain." (15:19) He says that the left side of the brain functions in most adults like a digital computer processing information in a linear, rational, digital manner. The right cerebral hemisphere operates through metaphoric intuitive and analogic processes. It takes little imagination to see where the

cultural bias exists and its resultant influence on educational strategies. Samples concludes: "Human beings reach the highest expressions of their existence when their entire essence as a being is blended into the synergic involvement of all their capacities at once." (15:23)

Samples has developed educational programs at the public school level for the development of the right cerebral hemisphere. He has found:

1. When educational ecologies were created in which the functions of the right cerebral hemisphere were celebrated and enhanced, the students' self-esteem increased.
2. The performance of skills typically assigned to the left cerebral hemisphere increased at the same time.
3. Students chose to explore greater numbers of content areas and to greater depth in the arts, sciences and humanities. (15:21)

It would appear that Samples' work documents the necessity of educating the "whole person" for development of deeper levels of self understanding.

4. To help students be open, honest, and trusting in their relationships with others.

George Leonard has said that "a world in which everyone will be in touch needs people in touch with themselves." Chickering adds fact to opinion--"The average density of Colonial America was one person per square mile; human contact was circumscribed and a matter of choice. Now Chicago has more than three million in roughly the same area--a density of ten thousand persons per square mile--and there is no escape. (11:14)

Leonard goes on to say,

One of the first tasks of education, then, is to return man to himself; to encourage rather than stifle awareness; to educate the emotions, the senses, the so-called autonomic systems; to help people become truly responsive and therefore truly responsible.

(7:127)

It seems unlikely that openness, honesty and trust will be learned anywhere except under conditions where they are fully present. The person in education is profoundly the most important element in the learning process. This seems so obvious that it seems to be overlooked. We expend enormous amounts of energy on facility construction and maintenance, curriculum development, methods of instruction, evaluation, policy and procedure development, budget preparation, accounting, embellishing services, public relations, data manipulation, working conditions, and less time on characteristics and concerns of students, institutional research, learning strategies, direct services to students, environmental management, and long range planning. What we never seem to get around to is--who is the person doing the educating and more important, who should that person be? A few people, Ed Gleazzer among them, have called for a new kind of faculty member in community colleges, but that topic seldom, if ever, gets discussed on community college campuses. How do we confront the issue that the most important issue is simply not addressed--namely, what should be the characteristics of the person who is the key to learning, i.e., the instructor or the counselor who works directly with the student? Professor William Arrowsmith spoke very forcefully to this point:

It is men we need, not programs. It is possible for a student to go from kindergarten to graduate school without ever encountering a man--a man who might for the first time give him the only profound motivation for learning, the hope of becoming a better man. Learning matters, of course; but it is the means, not the end, and the end must always be either

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